

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Initially, Applicant would like to express appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Official Action provided.

Applicant also acknowledges with appreciation the Examiner's continued indication that claims 7 and 8 contain allowable subject matter on Page 5 of the Official Action.

Upon entry of the above amendments, claims 1 and 10 will have been amended. Claims 1 and 3-14 are currently pending, with claims 11-14 being withdrawn from consideration in the Official Action dated August 16, 2007. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the outstanding rejections, and allowance of all the claims pending in the present application.

In the Official Action, the Examiner has rejected claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Without acquiescing to the propriety of the Examiner's rejection, Applicant has amended claim 10, where appropriate, in order correct the error in claim dependency. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112 is improper and should be withdrawn.

In the Official Action, the Examiner has rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over IGARASHI (U.S. Pub. No. 2004/0014335); and

the Examiner rejected dependent claims 3-6, 9 and 10, based upon IGARASHI in view of OKURA (U.S. Patent No. 5,975,916).

Without acquiescing to the propriety of the Examiner's rejections, claim 1 has been amended solely in order to expedite prosecution of the present application.

In this regard, Applicant notes that IGARASHI, alone or in any properly reasoned combination, does not disclose the combination of elements as recited in amended claim 1.

In particular, claim 1 recites a connector including, inter alia, a header having a header body formed of an insulation material, and a plurality of header posts held on side walls of the header body, the header body having two pairs of header reinforcing metal fittings, each pair of the header reinforcing metal fittings being embedded into end portions of the header body in a longitudinal direction so as to extend in a width-wise direction of the header, and each header reinforcing metal fitting being not electrically connected to a land of a circuit board, each pair of the header reinforcing metal fittings having a cross-section when viewed in the width-wise direction of the header, substantially the same as a cross-section of the header posts excluding terminal ends.

Applicant submits that IGARASHI lacks (alone or in any properly reasoned combination) any disclosure of at least the above-noted combination of elements.

More specifically, Applicant submits that because the header reinforcing metal fittings of the presently claimed invention do not have a terminal end, each of the header reinforcing metal fittings has a cross-section (when viewed in the width-wise direction of the header) which is substantially the same as a cross-section of the header posts; i.e., excluding terminal ends.

In this regard, Applicant submits that the device of IGARASHI is very different structurally from the presently claimed invention. In particular, Applicant submits that IGARASHI discloses two header reinforcing metal fittings 30, each of which is press-fitted into a recess provided in both ends of the header (see FIG. 2A and paragraph

[0038] of IGARASHI). Further, Applicant submits that because the header reinforcing metal fittings 30 include the fitting portion 30m connecting the pair of leg portions 30f, the header reinforcing metal fittings 30 of IGARASHI do not have a cross-section (i.e., when viewed in the width-wise direction of the header) substantially the same as the header posts 28Ai and 28Bi. Therefore, Applicant submits that device of IGARASHI has a disadvantage (i.e. in comparison to the presently claimed invention) in that the header reinforcing metal fittings must be formed and press-fit independently of the header posts; thereby, resulting in a less efficient manufacturing process.

Additionally, Applicant submits that surface sinks may occur in end portions of conventional header and socket bodies. Contrary to conventional header and socket bodies, Applicant submits that because the header reinforcing metal fittings and socket reinforcing metal fittings of the presently claimed invention are embedded into a corresponding header body and socket body by insertion molding, surface sinks in the end portions of the header body and the socket body may be prevented. Further, Applicant submits that, even if surface sinking occurs (to some extent), the depth of such surface sinking may be reduced by the presence of the presently claimed embedded reinforcing metal fittings.

In this regard, contrary to the presently claimed invention, the device of IGARASHI has the disadvantage of being vulnerable to surface sinks since there are no metal fittings present when forming the header and socket body by resin molding. Additionally, Applicant submits that because the reinforcing metal fittings are only inserted into the recess after formation of the header and socket body, end portions of the

header body and socket body may be damaged due to pressure applied to the reinforcing metal fittings while press-fitting them into corresponding recesses.

Thus, Applicant submits that IGARASHI does not disclose at least the presently claimed header having a header body formed of an insulation material, and a plurality of header posts held on side walls of the header body, the header body having two pairs of header reinforcing metal fittings, each pair of the header reinforcing metal fittings being embedded into end portions of the header body in a longitudinal direction so as to extend in a width-wise direction of the header, each header reinforcing metal fitting being not electrically connected to a land of a circuit board, and each pair of the header reinforcing metal fittings having a cross-section when viewed in the width-wise direction of the header, substantially the same as a cross-section of the header posts excluding terminal ends, as generally recited in claim 1.

Nor does ISHIGARI disclose the numerous advantageous associated therewith; thus, Applicant submits that the Examiner's assertions of obvious modification are without any factual support.

In regard to the rejection of dependent claims 3-6, 9 and 10, based upon IGARASHI in view of OKURA, Applicant submits that these claims are at least patentable due to their dependencies from claim 1 for the reasons discussed supra.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that the rejections of claims 1, 3-6, 9 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) are improper and should be withdrawn.

In view of the amendments and remarks herein, Applicant submits that independent claim 1 in condition for allowance. With regard to dependent claims 3-10, Applicant asserts that these claims are allowable on their own merit, as well as because of

their respective dependencies from independent claim 1, which Applicant has shown to be allowable.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims in the present application are clearly patentable over the references cited by the Examiner, either alone or in combination, and an indication to such effect is respectfully requested, in due course.

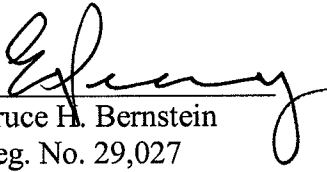
SUMMARY

Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance, and respectfully requests an indication to that effect. Applicant has argued the allowability of the claims and pointed out deficiencies of the applied references. Accordingly, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action and allowance of the present application and all the claims therein are respectfully requested and is now believed to be appropriate.

Applicant notes that this amendment is being made to advance prosecution of the application to allowance and should not be considered as surrendering equivalents of the territory between the claims prior to the present amendment and the amended claims. Further, no acquiescence as to the propriety of the Examiner's rejections is made by the present amendment. All other amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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